



A CASE STUDY OF HEALTH INFORMATION NEEDS OF DOCTORS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO HYDERABAD KARNATAKA

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ABSTRACT

This study attempt to highlight Health Information needs of doctors of four district of Hyderabad Karnataka Region survey method was used for data collection using structured questionnaire. Randomly sampling was used for data collection. Data was collected from 1047 doctors in the region. Results show that Physicians have a variety of information needs at the point of care including refreshing, confirming, logistics, teaching, idea generating and personal learning and is Lack of time for utilizing the Library and the information sources.

KEYWORDS: Information seeking behaviour; Doctors; Health information.

INTRODUCTION :

Information is considered as an important resource that contributes towards the development of a nation. It provides the basic needs for the development of knowledge, the basis for innovations, the resources for informed country, and as a result, becomes a key commodity



for the progress of a society. Information needs are an 'expression of missing information that is required to accomplish a specific task[1]. Yet, many physician information needs go unmet[2] due to a variety of barriers [3], including uncertainty about which information resources to use[3, 4]. The number of information resources available to physicians is continually growing and there is a lack of guidance about which information resources to access at the point of care[5].

Fundamentally, the uncertainty surrounding information resource selection is an education problem. Researchers have suggested that knowledge of physicians' information needs at the point of care may facilitate the development of

customized training for resource selection in practice[6,7]. To design such training, there is a need to identify practicing physicians' information needs and their relationship to information resource selection.

The primary aim of our research is to identify practicing physicians' information needs that can be satisfied by searching the biomedical literature.

OBJECTIVES

The following main objectives are framed to conduct this study.

The objectives are

- To understand the technology literacy among the doctors,
- To determine the frequency of using library,
- To know the different Type of Information required for Doctors in the

medical practice and

- To understand the means to improve and develop Health Information Resources.

METHODOLOGY

Questionnaire method is adopted to collect the data from doctors covering total population of 1047 doctors from four districts of Hyderabad Karnataka region who are specialized in Gynaecologist, General Medicine, Paediatrician, Orthopaedic and Eye – Ophthalmology.

Table 1: Study Population based on Specialization of Doctors

District		Specialist					Total
		Gynaecologist	General Medicine	Paediatrician	Orthopaedic	Eye - Ophthalmology	
Bidar	Count	87	34	70	39	23	253
	Percentage	34.4%	13.4%	27.7%	15.4%	9.1%	100.0%
Kalburgi (Gulbarga)	Count	87	71	82	57	52	349
	Percentage	24.9%	20.3%	23.5%	16.3%	14.9%	100.0%
Raichur	Count	72	68	73	46	37	296
	Percentage	24.3%	23.0%	24.7%	15.5%	12.5%	100.0%
Yadgir	Count	52	28	31	20	18	149
	Percentage	34.9%	18.8%	20.8%	13.4%	12.1%	100.0%
Total	Count	298	201	256	162	130	1047
	Percentage	28.5%	19.2%	24.5%	15.5%	12.4%	100.0%

Results and Discussion

Table 2: Devices and Technologies available with Doctors

Devices and Technologies	Frequency	Percentage
Basic Mobile Phone	256	24.4
iPhone	887	84.7
Blackberry	367	35.05
Android	522	49.8
iPod	645	61.6
Personal Digital Assistant (PDA)	421	40.2
Laptop/Netbook	954	91.1
Desktop Computer	589	56.2
Internet Connectivity	1042	99.5

Table 2 shows a summary of technologies available to the respondents. The majority of Doctors reported having a Internet connectivity 99.5%. Laptops or netbooks were more common than desktop computers 91.1% and 56.2%, respectively and Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) 40.2%.

Table 3: Use of Internet

Experience in using Internet	Frequency	Percent
2-5 years a	363	34.7
6-10 years	428	40.9
More than 10 years	231	22.1
Recently	25	2.4
Total	1047	100.0

It is observed from Table 3 that most of the Doctors i.e. 428(40.9%) are having 6-10 years Experience in using Internet followed by 363(34.7%) of Doctors having 2-5 years of Experience in using Internet. Only 25(2.4%) of Doctors having Experience in using Internet.

Table 4: Frequency of using library

Frequency of using library	Frequency	Percent
Everyday	31	3.0
Twice a day	215	20.5
Once in fortnight	119	11.4
Occasionally	295	28.2
Once in two days	25	2.4
Once in a week	126	12.0
once in a month	123	11.7
Never	113	10.8
Total	1047	100.0

Table 4 indicates that of the total 295(28.2%) of Doctors visit occasionally to the library followed by 215(20.5%) of Doctors visit Twice a Day. Limited 31(3.0%) of Doctors visit their library Every Day.

Table 5: Type of Information required for Doctors in the medical practice

Type of Information	Frequency	Percentage
While I'm with the patient.	196	18.7
After I see the patient	277	26.5
It depends on the case	716	68.4
New developments in family medicine	645	61.6
Drug information	665	63.5
Govt regulations, laws relating to health care	561	53.6
Routine patient care	318	30.4
Practice organization and management	320	30.6
Disease-special information	513	49.0
New medical equipment	627	59.9

Medical practitioners need various types of information, for example, new medical equipment or disease-special information. Some information is presented in the form of figures, i.e. statistical data or some contains technical details, such as scientific or technological ideas and skills. Table 5 shows that 68.4% doctors require information depending upon cases, 61.6% of doctors requiring information pertaining to new developments in family medicines. 18.7% of doctors require information while i am with the patient.

Table 6: Means to improve and develop Health Information Resources

Measures	Frequency	Percentage
Health Education for patients	879	84.0
Provide Hospital Library	699	66.8
Provide better qualified staff in library	714	68.2
Digitize all information resources	830	79.3
Train doctors on use of ICT	818	78.1

Means to improve and develop Health Information Resources has been summarized in Table 6. The table 6 depicts the respondent's improve and develop Health Information Resources. The Doctors 879(84%) suggested to Health Education

for patients followed by 830(79.3%) of Doctors suggested to Digitize all information resources and 699(66.8%) Doctors suggested to Provide Hospital Library.

CONCLUSION:

Physicians have a variety of information needs at the point of care including refreshing, confirming, logistics, teaching, idea generating and personal learning. The study results show that there is Lack of time for utilizing the Library and the information sources. Here more emphasis given to Health education for patients and all the information resources must be digitized. This study results show that the medical practitioners in developing countries need more awareness about the use of various information sources (including digital) for their professional/personal competency developments. They may utilize the various training programs offered by the government of India (8). Government of India is providing Continuing Medical Education (CME) programs for the medical practitioner offered not only for the government doctors and also qualified private practitioners. The training programmes offered by the government could include a separate module on "information literacy for medical practitioners" which may include digital information literacy skills.

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